

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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TAGS: PEPR, PINT, SOPN, KS, US
SUBJ: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE QUESTIONS
ROKG

REF: SEOUL 2995 (DTG 120922Z APR 78)

SUMMARY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
INTERPELLATIONS APRIL 12 AND 13 WERE MARKED BY EMOTIONAL
LANGUAGE, HIGHLY CRITICAL OF US, AND RECEIVED EXTENSIVE PROMINENT
MEDIA COVERAGE. QUESTIONERS CONTINUE TO ASSUME BUGGING
TOOK PLACE AND ARE DEMANDING HIGH-LEVEL APOLOGY. HEARINGS
APPEAR TO HAVE PERMITTED SOME VENTING OF EMOTIONS AND ACTUAL
TONE ON SECOND DAY SOMEWHAT LESS INTENSE. END SUMMARY.

1. APRIL 13 MORNING VERNACULAR NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF
PREVIOUS DAY'S QUESTIONING OF ROKG IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S
FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE EMPHASIZED INTEREST AND EXCITEMENT
GENERATED BY DISCUSSION OF ISSUES PENDING BETWEEN KOREA AND
US. BOTH MAJOR PAPERS DEVOTED OVER HALF OF FRONTPAGE
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TO STORY, WITH CONDENSED VERSIONS OF QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS ON INSIDE PAGES, AND BOTH DESCRIBED SESSION
AS "A SCENE OF CENSURE". HAN'GUK ILBO CALLED COMMITTEE
SESSION "UNPRECEDENTDLY HEATED" AND SAID ASSEMBLYMEN'S
STRONG QUESTIONS AND ROUGH CENSURE OF US MADE ONEFEEL
THE CHANGED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OLD ALLIES KOREA AND
THE US. CHOSON ILBO, IN FRONTPAGE ATMOSHPERE PIECE,

COMMENTED ON ASSEMBLYMEN'S FREE USE OF EXITED TERMS IN CRITICIZING THE UNITED STATES AND TENSION PALPABLE IN EXCHANGE OF "HEATED PURSUIT" OF SOLONS AND "DIPLOMATIC RESPONSES" OF FOREIGN MINISTER. CHOSON ALSO NOTED UNUSUAL VISIT TO SESSION BY NA SPEAKER CHONG IL-KWON, AND PRESENCE OF THREE FLOOR LEADERS (KIM YONG-T'AE, DRP; SONG WON-YONG, NDP; AND YANG CHONG-KYU, INDEPENDENT), AS WELL AS YUJONG-HOE'S DEPUTY FLOOR LEADER YI SON-DO AND MANY OTHER ASSEMBLYMEN.

2. APRIL 13 EXCHANGES COVERED ESSENTIALLY SAME GROUND AS PREVIOUS DAY. O CHONG- KUN (YUJONG-HOE) SAID THAT US PRESS HAS BEEN PREJUDICED, IN CRITICIZING ROKG OVER PAK TONG-SON CASE, WHILE REMAINING SILENT ON BLUE HOUSE BUGGING AND HE QUESTIONED WHETHER ROKG WAS PREPARED TO REQUEST AN EXPLANATION FROM PRESIDENT CARTER OR SECRETARY VANCE. KANG SANG-UK (DRP) CALLED US ATTITUDE TOWARD KOREA ONE OF "HIGH HANDEDNESS" AND "TYRANNY". HE REFERRED TO HIGH LEVEL APOLOGIES GIVEN TO GERMAN AND SINGAPORE GOVERNMENTS OVER INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES AND DEMANDED RESTORATION OF RECIPROCAL AND EQUAL RELATIONS WITH THE US. KANG SEEMED TO SUM UP FEELING OF MOST SPEAKERS WHEN HE NOTED "PORTER'S CONFIRMATION OF BUGGING IS MORE AUTHORITATIVE THAN SECRETARY VANCE. WE BELIEVE THE BUGGING HAPPENED; WE DEMAND ONLY A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION. BROWN, BERGER, AND HABIB MUST TESTIFY". NDP'S HAN YONG-SU HIT INEFFICIENT GOVERNMENT, NOTING US HAD MADE GOOD USE OF PAK TONG-SON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CASE TO PRESS ROKG, AND "WE COULD HAVE DONE A BETTER JOB, IF OUR PRESS AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN 1976". HAN ALSO DEMANDED CLARIFICATION OF WHO HAD RECEIVED PARTS OF ONE MILLION DOLLARS PAK TONG-SON TESTIFIED HE GAVE TO US CONGRESSMEN AND ROK OFFICIALS. (FOREIGN MINISTER CLAIMED IGNORANCE OF LATTER MATTER AND ASKED FOR TIME TO INVESTIGATE IT.)

3. FOREIGN MINISTE PAK TONG-CHIN'S REPLIES COVERED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME GROUND AS ON WEDNESDAY, PAK REPEATED THAT, AFTER AMBASSADOR SNEIDER'S ORAL EXPLANATION, ROKG, NOT SATISFIED WITH IT, DEMANDED A FURTHER SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION IN WRITING. ON TOPIC OF US PULL-OUT, FOREIGN MINISTER MENTIONED MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY AND GOOD MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. HE NOTED THAT CARTER'S COMMITMENT TO DEFENSE OF ROK HAS NOT CHANGED, REFERRING TO PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PAK AND STATEMENTS BY DEFENSE SECRETARY BROWN.

4. CONCLUDING SESSION, COMMITTEE CHARMAN CH'OE YONG-HUI REFERRED TO INDIGNATION OF GENERAL PUBLIC OVER

BUGGING INCIDENT, AND COMMENTED THAT BOTH GOVERNMENT AND
OPPOSITION REPRESENTATIVES HAD URGED ADMINISTRATION TO
DEMAND SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION FROM HIGH-LEVEL US
AUTHORITIES. HE ALSO NOTED INTEREST IN TROOP WITHDRAWAL
AND TRIPARTITE TALK ISSUES.

5. KOREA HERALD EDITOR TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER APRIL 13
THAT COMMITTEE SESSION WAS SERVING AS OPPORTUNITY FOR
KOREANS TO PURGE PENT-UP FEELINGS TOWARD US WHICH HAVE BEEN
BUILDING UP OVER PAST YEAR OF UNCERTAINTY IN US POLICIES.
EMBASSY EMPLOYEE WHO HAS ATTENDED SESSIONS OBSERVES
SOME OF THIS EFFECT ALREADY, NOTING THAT ATMOSPHERE
TODAY WAS FAR LESS EXCITED THAN ON APRIL 12, ALTHOUGH
LANGUAGE USED CONTINUED STRONG.
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